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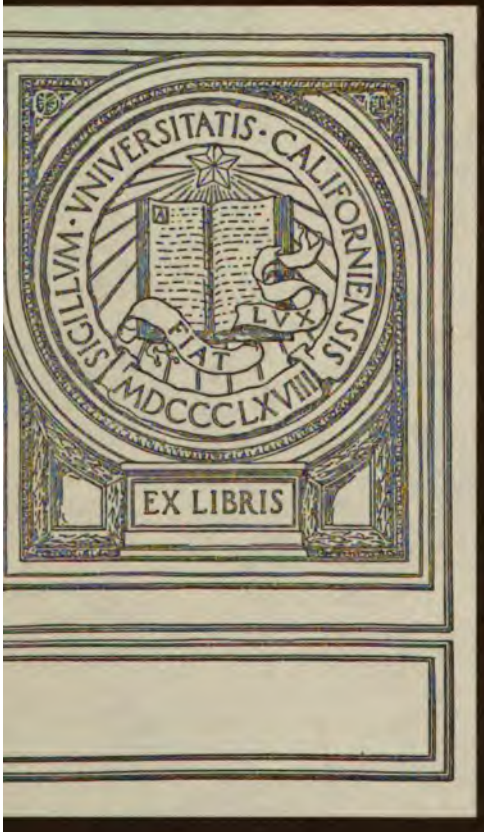
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# MARJORIE PICKTHALL:

## *Her Poetic Genius and Art.*

BY

J. D. LOGAN, A.M., Ph.D., Litt. D.

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FRONTISPIECE

MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL

Courtesy of McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, publishers of Caswell's "Canadian Singers and Their Songs" (1919), from which this portrait and the fac-simile of Miss Pickthall's poem, "On a Violet Leaf From Keats' Grave" were reproduced in this volume. (See opposite page 16).

# MARJORIE PICKTHALL:

## *Her Poetic Genius and Art.*

### AN APPRECIATION AND AN ANALYSIS OF AESTHETIC PARADOX

---

BY

J. D. LOGAN, Ph.D. (Harvard), Hon. Litt. D. (Acadia)

**Lecturer on Canadian Literature, Acadia University; Fellow of the American Geographical Society; Member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Etc.**

"Lo, our proud lamps are emptied of their light,
Weary our hands to toil, our feet to roam:
Our day is past and swiftly falls Thy night.
Lord, lead us home."

—Pickthall: *Deus Misereatur.*

---

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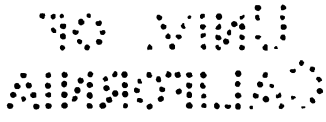

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EN

To the Memory
of
The Beautiful Spirit
whose
Exquisite Poetry
is
"of fragrance made,
Woven and rhymed of light."

---

AGNUS DEI, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona ei requiem sempiternam; et lux perpetua luceat ei.

M223939

# PREFACE.

NOT to any literary historian or critic do I yield a jot in admiration of the spiritual character, poetic genius, and poetry of the late Marjorie Pickthall. Whatever loyalty I feel to her spirit and whatever sense of obligation I feel to honor her name and poetical art, as in this essay I have tried to do, still I must remember loyalties to my professional ideal, to society, and to beauty and truth. What my heart incites me to do, namely, to sublimate to a unique pinnacle of distinction the poetry of Marjorie Pickthall—to say of her, as she has said of another,

> "Under her feet all beauty was laid low,
> In her deep eyes all beauty was made clear"—

my love of truth and my critical judgment compel me to express my admiring appreciations of her beautiful spirit, her poetic genius, and her actual art in poetry with a strict moral regard for the highest standards of criticism and for the work of other Canadian poets.

The pamphlet in hand is meant, therefore, as a distinct memorial to the spirit and genius of Marjorie Pickthall; and if I strive, as I do, to fix her rightful quality and place in the history of Canadian, or English, or world, literature, and if I do not let my heart run away with my critical judgment, but signalize her for precocious and rare virtuosity in the technique of the lyrical and pictorial treatment of Nature in poetry, rather than as a profound poet of the Spirit, it must not be thought that I am failing to give her due honor and distinction as a poet, or show less critical acumen than do those who have called Marjorie Pickthall "the flawless poet" or "Canada's chief poet," and other names of disordered fancy. Hurriedly, and therefore inadequate-

ly and not wholly effectively, I have written the essay in hand; but it is a sincere—and, I may say, in the conventional way, a lovingly composed—memorial to her spirit and genius. I am sure that had it been written before her lamented death, and been read by her, Marjorie Pickthall would have approved my loyalty to truth and beauty, whether or not privately she would have agreed with my analysis and estimate of her genius and art in poetry. At any rate, the death of Marjorie Pickthall was, humanly speaking, "untimely;" since it caused a great loss to Canadian literature and to literature in general. For had she lived, it is possible that she would have gone on to create poetry which would place her with the great. But as it is, the poetry of Marjorie Pickthall remains, as also it will perdure, an Ideal, both in spiritual beauty as such and in technical perfection, for the future poets of Canada. Can I give a poet any sincerer and higher praise and distinction than that which I have thus given Marjorie Pickthall, and which I have orientated in the body of the essay in hand?

My appreciations of the genius of Marjorie Pickthall are distinguished from others' in three ways: I signalize her, as Mr. Laurence E. Jones also has tentatively done, as essentially an exquisite (not "flawless," "impeccable") craftswoman in poetry; I hold that she did not—and could not—have Greek "feeling" for Nature in her Nature-poetry; and, finally, I hold that she was not a Christian mystic. These three points I have also orientated in the body of the essay in hand.

I should like here, however, specially to remark on the alleged "Catholic spirit" in some of her verse. With due respect to "The Gleaner," who writes on this matter in The Catholic Register, I observe that the introductory note to "The Lamp of Poor Souls" is not Catholic orthodoxy. The "Lamp" was not, as the Note says it was, to remind the faithful "to pray for the souls of those dead whose kinsfolk were too poor to pay for prayers and masses." The "Lamp" was to remind the faithful to pray either (1) for the "unknown" or "neglected" dead in purgatory, or (2) for those dead who have no relative living to pray for them. Further, no Catholic "pays" for prayers and masses for the dead,

as if, and often so alleged by non-Catholics, the faithful can "buy" their way out of purgatory and into heaven. The so-called "pay" for prayers and masses is not an exaction by priests or the church, but a voluntary offering, gift of gratitude, by the layman to a clergy who are "without purse."

Again: in "Pieter Marinus" we find a winsome *poetic* conception of the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory—the cleansing of the soul of Pieter the Sailor by water; whereas the Scriptures teach us that the cleansing shall be by an inner "fiery" process—the agony of a mighty repentance and purification under the rod of God who shall search the souls of the dead in Purgatory. The orthodox Catholic dreads the purgation after death because the Catholic knows the fiery purification it will be, whereas the purgation of the soul as represented in Marjorie Pickthall's "Pieter Marinus" wins us because inwardly we hope that the cleansing may be thus easy and not too painful to the spirit.

It is all beautiful and tender "poetry," but it is not orthodox Catholicism. The poet was merely in love with the beauty of Catholic dogma, discipline, and legend whenever she essayed the poetry of *her* ideas of the Incarnation, the Mass, Purgatory, or aught else of the kind. It is all, indeed, beautiful poetry as imaginative verse; and over the hearts and imaginations of non-Catholics, it has the same kind of *sentimental* effect as have the text and music of "The Rosary." Marjorie Pickthall's alleged medieval Christian or Catholic mysticism is only insincere (not heart-felt) *quasi-Catholicism*; and it is not mysticism at all, but rather a wistful sentimentality about mysteries into which, as we shall see, she could peep, but could not deeply feel, savingly understand, or make part of her inmost soul.

I regret having to introduce slight controversies into the discussion in the text of the essay. But I have placed these matters, except one, all in the Notes which follow the text of the essay. In the Appendices will be found several "features," as the newspapers say, of special interest to the students of Marjorie Pickthall's poetry, and to "collectors," and to literary workers. Engaging essays could be written particularly on "Alliteration in the Poetry of Marjorie Pickthall," or on "The

Sources of the Color Images and Figures in the Poetry of Marjorie Pickthall," or on "The Poets who 'Influenced' Marjorie Pickthall." It would be a nice essay in criticism to inquire how far the poet was influenced by her reading of (if she did read) Theocritus, the Greek Anthology, Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Browning, Arnold, Meredith (George), Tennyson, Swinburne, Mrs. Browning, Christina Rossetti, Alice Meynell, Lionel Johnson, Coventry Patmore, Father Tabb, and others. I had not time to indicate in an Appendix certain "influences"—such as George Meredith, Browning, Swinburne, and Tennyson—which are unmistakable.

Part of the matter in this pamphlet was written for publication in *The Canadian Magazine*, and by the courtesy of the Editor, Mr. Newton MacTavish, M. A., I am permitted to reprint it.

I am indebted to Messrs. McClelland and Stewart for permission to reproduce the photographic portrait and the facsimile verses of Marjorie Pickthall from Caswell's "Canadian Singers and Their Songs," published by that firm, and to Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, publishers of her novel, "The Bridge," for the portrait of her seated. To Miss Annie F. Donohoe, Librarian of the Nova Scotia Legislative Library, I express my warm thanks for her kindness in assisting me with the bibliography of the original *loci* and dates of publication of many of Marjorie Pickthall's poems. I also express my indebtedness for similar courtesies to Miss Mary Durney, Deputy Librarian of the Citizens' Library, Halifax.

May 8th, 1922, Halifax, N. S.

F.—N.
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# ESSAY:
## Marjorie Pickthall.

MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL

Late portrait of the deceased poet. Courtesy of McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, publishers of Miss Pickthall's poetic drama, "The Wood Carver's Wife" (1922). To face page 12.

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# Marjorie Pickthall:

## Her Poetic Genius and Art.

---

### INTRODUCTION.

"Nay in what world, then, Spirit, wast thou born?
Or to what World-Soul art thou entered in?
Feel the Self fade, feel the great life begin,
With Love re-rising in the cosmic morn".
—F. W. H. Myers

---

WHENEVER I have thought of Marjorie Pickthall, the *person*, I have re-imaged the kneeling, praying Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and I have fancied that I heard, from her lips, the agony of Christ's prayer, as given in the Vulgate scriptures:—*Pater mi, si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste*—"O, My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" What was the "cup" from which Marjorie Pickthall drank, and what were the contents, which, when she had drunk of them, caused her Self to fade and her Soul to enter in the World-Soul—changed her from a natural, happy poet of Nature into a wistful, sorrowing poet of the Spirit, I do not know; and I should be disloyal to Truth and Beauty if I should be so vulgarly curious as to inquire. Let her spiritual secret—the secret of her rare and pathetically beautiful personality—lie in the bosom of her God.

On the other hand, whenever I think of Marjorie Pickthall, the *poet*, I face an aesthetic paradox—a naturally *pagan** spirit that delighted, with the imagination and heart of a child, in the

*I do not mean, of course, atheistic or unchristian, but in the pagan sense of loving the sensuous delights of Nature as a *companionable* world.

light and magic and divinity of Nature, compelled, by some strange, occult vision, to strive to love the ascetic beauty of *christian* mysteries and discipline, and to poetize these, as she did, with a tender and winning loveliness, but tinged with a poignant wistfulness for "otherworldliness," as if resignedly regretting the sacrifice of her natural pagan pre-occupation with the beauty of this world.

## I.—EXQUISITE ARTISTRY.

What first brought Marjorie Pickthall to appreciative public notice, and distinguished her from other contemporary poets in Canada, was a singular *precocious virtuosity* in verbal painting of Nature and in verbal music. When she began to write verse, Lampman had been dead a decade, Roberts had gone over to fiction, Campbell had turned to poetic drama, Duncan Campbell Scott had achieved a first-rate name for exquisite artistry in verse, Bliss Carman was internationally known as one of the world's sweetest warblers of wood-notes wild; and her contemporaries, of a near age to her own, and chiefly the members of "the Vaudeville School of Canadian Poetry," led by R. W. Service, had neither aesthetic taste nor the artistic conscience. Naturally, those on "the *qui vive*" for New Voices in the poetic choir of Canada, heard the free, happy, pure pipings of a newcomer to the choir—Marjorie Pickthall, singing shyly from the corner of a daily newspaper, but singing with a rare lilt—so rare in Canada indeed that the little world which heard her first warblings wondered if the singer were a Canadian person, but felt that her song was not autochthonous to Canada, that the singer would create poetry which would be *more* than Canadian, which would be a contribution to literature as such, to world-literature.

What, then, caused Marjorie Pickthall, from the beginning, to win public notice, and to stand out from the Vaudevillian crew of poetasters in Canada, was, as I said, her precocious virtuosity as a word-painter, verbal colorist, and melodist. From the start, even in the sixteenth year of her age, she was a

remarkable artist in colorful and musical language—original and adroit in poetic craftsmanship, in "the mastery of rhythm and the management of rhyme." It is as an adroit and exquisite *craftswoman* (or "artist," if one prefer the term), not for originality of imaginative conception, that, from her first printed essays in verse to the last, Marjorie Pickthall must be noted as a specially gifted poet in Canada, and must be accorded a relatively honorable, possibly high, place in the history of English literature —not "world literature," as we shall see—produced in Canada.

Let us observe Marjorie Pickthall's precocious technical virtuosity in her first publicly printed poem—"The Song of the Nixies"—which was a prize poem, published in "The Young People's Corner" of *The Mail and Empire*, Toronto, 1899, when she was shortly past sixteen years of age.* In a letter, under the date of January 16th, 1908, to "The Gleaner" (who, I learn, is Rev. Father O'Sullivan, Port Hope, Ont.), as printed in *The Catholic Register* (Toronto, April 27, 1922), Marjorie Pickthall wrote, in part,—

> "REV. and DEAR FATHER,—I do not think any excuses need accompany letters which are so nice as yours. I read it with a very great deal of pleasure and interest, for 'The Song of the Nixies' was *the first of my poems which ever appeared in print*, and so an especial sentiment is connected with it in my mind . . . . . .
>
> "Very truly yours,
> (Signed) "Marjorie L. C. Pickthall."

*The young poet herself is the authority for the fact that this was her first publicly printed poem. In a recent article (*The Halifax Herald*, April 22, 1922), Dr. Archibald MacMechan, who as a literary historian is in a class by himself, that is, alone, makes this *claim*:—'To James Mavor [Professor of Economics, Toronto University] belongs the honor of discovering Marjorie Pickthall. In a religious paper in Toronto he found some lines entitled "A Prayer," which began:

"O keep the world forever at the dawn,"

. . . . . .

and he at once recognised the incommunicable touch of genius.' [I do not know the date of that poem, but it appears under the title "Dawn" in the poet's second volume, "The Lamp of Poor Souls" (pp. 56-58). Internal Evidences—the length of the poem, the sustained mood of wonder in it, and the fact that it appears in the collected verse of the poet's second volume, whereas "The Song of the Nixies" does not—would prove presumptively that "A Prayer" (or "Dawn") was of later date than "The Song of the Nixies," and that some other minds had been "discovering" Marjorie Pickthall before Professor Mavor espied the new singer. Not all the cultured and discerning minds in Canada belong to the professors or alumni of the University of Toronto. See also Note 1, page 27.—J. D. L.]

If "The Gleaner" is correct in his calculations,* Marjorie Pickthall was "discovered" by "The Gleaner" and others twenty-four years ago, that is, in or about 1899, when "The Song of the Nixies" was published, the first of her poems, as she herself states, to appear in the public prints. It is a really astonishing production for a girl barely sixteen years of age. Note the colorful imagery and musical lilt in it—

"O, leave ye your lakelets and sedge-mantled reaches;
The mermaids are calling, O hasten with me,
And play on the slopes of the broad yellow beaches,
Down by the sea.

"Down in the dingles the dew-drops are twining
Pearls from the cobwebs that hang from the flow'rs;
Moves now the wind, and with tremulous shining,
Fall they in show'rs.

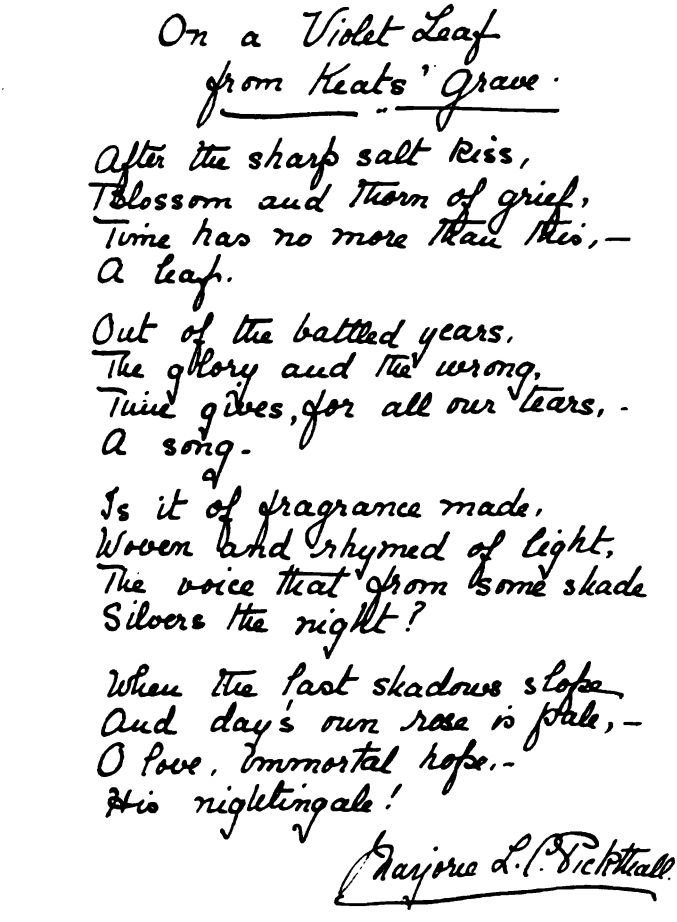
"See where the moonbeams, with soft silver whiteness,
Ripple the cornfields that lie 'neath the hill,
Changing and shifting from shadow to brightness—
Never once still!

"Swift let us pass by the soft-sighing rushes;
Dark are the pools where the alder-trees grow;
Gently the swing of the long ripple hushes
The lilies of snow.

"Haste! let us haste by the low-sweeping willows.
Down to the slopes of the tide-wrinkled sand,
Mermaids are waiting a-rock on the billows,
Hand clapsed in hand.

"Come! for too swiftly will hasten the dawning.
Come! for the yellow moon dips to the lea.
Come ye and play till the flush of the morning.
Down by the sea!"

* Note 1. Page 27.


On a Violet Leaf
from Keats' Grave.
After the sharp salt kiss,
Blossom and thorn of grief,
Time has no more than this,—
A leaf.
Out of the battled years,
The glory and the wrong,
Time gives, for all our tears,—
A song.
Is it of fragrance made,
Woven and rhymed of light,
The voice that from some shade
Silvers the night?
When the last shadows close
And day's own rose is pale,—
O Love, immortal hope,—
This nightingale!
Marjorie L. C. Pickthall

Fac-simile of poem by the late Marjorie L. C. Pickthall. Reproduced from Caswell's "Canadian Singers and Their Songs" (1919). Courtesy of the publishers, McClelland & Stewart. To face page 16.

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In those verses we have the first, the original—the "real"—Marjorie Pickthall, who is the lover and lilter of Nature. As a mere slip of a girl she divines the truth that half of the appeal of poetry is the music of it. And so she, from the beginning, makes her verse musical, and adds to this a freshness, delicacy, and charm of airiness and color. It will be found, I believe, that she made no advance in poetry, from her first essays, say, in her sixteenth year to her thirty-ninth (or last), save in perfection of craftsmanship, gaining, that is, in artistic finish of form and structure, mastery of rhythm and rhyme, delicate sensuousness, grace of diction, charm of color and pure verbal music. Let us say, then, that the poetry of Marjorie Pickthall is assured of immortality as an Ideal for future poets of Canada to emulate in technical perfection, and that when she sang of Nature, the afflatus in that case being natural to her genius, she created authentic poetry as such, poetry that was arresting, airy, bright, liquid, limpid, and, to use her own words with reference to Keats—

> " . . . . . of fragrance made,
> Woven and rhymed of light."*

But we must be critically careful not to give Marjorie Pickthall, as the *singer* and nature-*painter*, which she was *par excellence*, undue distinction, as if she had no peers in Canada. "For thirty years," said Dr. Archibald MacMechan in a lecture on our poet, as reported in the daily press (*The Evening Echo*, Halifax, December 10, 1918)—"for thirty years I have been a student of Canadian Literature, and a watcher of the skies for the appearing of new [poetic] stars. In that time four only have arisen, the greatest of whom is a woman—Marjorie Pickthall."

Of the other three, Lampman, I know, was one. The remaining two must be chosen from Roberts, Campbell, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Bliss Carman. If Dr. MacMechan had in mind four "stars" in the technic of poetry, in the demesne of Canada, the four Canadian poets who can be regarded as pervasively technical artists in beauty of diction, imagery, color, and verbal and rhythmic music, are—Carman and Duncan

* Note 2. Page 27.

Campbell Scott among the still living, and Lampman and Marjorie Pickthall amongst the deceased. Of these four, the late poet, whose genuinely lamented death has caused to disappear from Canadian literature—or literature as such—the re-incarnation of the spirit of Titania or of Ariel, must be reckoned the least, or, at best, not the greatest, even in craftsmanship.

Let me be just to others while yielding to none in my admiration of her genius and her artistry. It may be true that, as Mr. Laurence E. Jones says (*The University Magazine*, December, 1913), we may search in vain "for a lame or halting line, for a strained or dissonant rhyme. It is all careful and clean-cut, but perfectly free and flowing none the less." But it is absurd to make her *sui generis* as a technical artist, excluding even Sappho, Alcaeus, Horace, Catullus, Gray, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Arnold, Meredith, and Swinburne, by saying, as Dr. MacMechan has said (*vid. loc. cit.*), that her poetry, as he finds, exhibits "a flawless technique. Her verse is as musical as Carman's, and as sincere as Lampman's; but, unlike both, it contains no failures. Her feeling for the right, the inevitable word ('le mot juste') is exquisite and sure . . . It is not too much to call her work impeccable."*

Dr. MacMechan's view would be important if it were not an uncritical opinion when it should state a matter of fact. No poet born of woman has been flawless, impeccable, in technique. Certainly Lampman, Carman, Duncan Campbell Scott are not; and there is certainly not flawless technique in these two lines, to take but two, by Marjorie Pickthall—

"In those fair coves where tempests *ne'er* should be."

This line is from "Dawn," the poem which, under the name "A Prayer," according to Dr. MacMechan, led Professor Mavor to the exclusive discovery of the new star in the poetic heavens of Canada. Next, consider the impeccability (?) of this line from Marjorie Pickthall's "Vale"—

"And when immortal morning *opes* her door."

* Note 3. Page 27.

Technically, her poetry is distinguished musically by an extraordinarily successful use of alliteration; but the defect in it is that, on the whole, her verse lacks *style*. I do not mean that it is not written in the grand style. Technically her verse is free, flowing, musical, airy, tripping, graceful, "woven and rhymed of light"—in a word, *feminine*. But, by thus much, does it lack originality and substance of style—the subtle quality which gives us the sense of having met with beauty that is memorably, unforgettably fine and pervasive as a spiritual essence. The supreme Canadian artist in the fine style in poetry, in substantial manner, is, in my view, Duncan Campbell Scott.* He is rivalled, at times, in substance as well as technical style, by Lampman. But neither of these poets has had the singing or lyrical gift that is Carman's or was Marjorie Pickthall's—but her lyrical gift was not in the same absolute degree or quality as is Carman's, which always has the sheer ecstatic lilt of the lark, while Marjorie Pickthall's was less above the earth, more confined, like the linnet's sweet, sensuous reaches in song. Lampman, Carman, and Scott may be technically at fault oftener than was Marjorie Pickthall; but when they are technically perfect, it is a finer perfection than hers, and their subtleties and sheer reaches in the technique of poetic style, and form, and in substance were not hers.

Yet I have no doubt that, had this darling of the gods, as her genius and, from the human point of view, untimely death, proved her to be—I have no doubt that had Marjorie Pickthall lived, she would have learned the finest technical reaches of Lampman, Carman and Scott; and that she would have come to take a place in English literature deservedly beside Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti, and Alice Meynell. Amongst her contemporaries in the homeland, there shall abide a green and sweet memory of her as "th' eclipse and glory of her kind" in the technical artistry of exquisite lyrical singing and fanciful painting of Nature's face, and moods, and life.

* Note 4. Page 27.

## II.—ATTITUDE TO NATURE.

"*Rare virtuosity in the technique of the lyrical and pictorial treatment of Nature*"—such is the formula of the essential, the natural, poetic genius of Marjorie Pickthall. Right are they who say that Nature was her chief mistress. But they are wrong in declaring that she had the Greek "feeling" for Nature, or that the Nature in her verse was that of the ancient Greeks. It was impossible for Marjorie Pickthall, an Anglo-Canadian, to have a Greek imagination; and they who claim that she had the ancient Greek feeling for Nature, might as rightfully claim that she had the ancient Gaelic or Keltic feeling for Nature, or the ancient Semitic feeling for the presence of God, or the medieval Breton feeling for Nature and the mystery of religious faith, which some have signalized as "mysticism" in Marjorie Pickthall's genius.

The truth is that, first, Marjorie Pickthall had a mind and imagination which were naturally pagan, and that, secondly, Nature was to her but the material for her fanciful and pretty treatment in verse. But to the Greeks Nature, as perceived and embodied in their mythology and poetry, was their *vision* of the *real* face and heart of Nature. They believed in gods, goddesses, heroes, muses, naiads, mermaids, satyrs, fauns, and what-not living creatures as being Nature herself. They were pagans. But Marjorie Pickthall had, by native gift, only the sensibility and imagination that were naturally *pagan* in a love of and preference for thus *visualizing* Nature. She had saturated her mind, by reading, with the mythology of the Greeks; and her naturally pagan sensibility and imagination re-colored and re-expressed this material in a delightful pagan—not Greek—way in verse. For the Greeks, as also the Kelts and Gaels, had a most lively sense of divinity in Nature—of spiritual presences everywhere, unseen but real and active. Marjorie Pickthall had no such lively sense of the reality of divinity in Nature. But she did have a lively pagan, if Anglo-Canadian, imagination; and so, with imaginative "make-believe," she peoples Nature with spirits, mermaids, nixies, fauns, elfs, playing with the Old Nurse

Nature, or with themselves, and rejoicing in the sights and sounds which they see and hear amongst the woodlands, streams, hills, flowers, and the shy forest creatures. She thus paganly poetizes Nature, beautifully, winningly; but it is all a *tour de force* of the senses and imagination *in her closet*, where she is temporarily shut off from the roar and turmoil of great cities.

Had she steeped herself as thoroughly in ancient Gaelic lore, myths and legends, she would have written as engagingly of the Nature of the Kelts. In her single poetic essay in Gaelic "feeling" for Nature—the Gael's innate love of Nature and the Homeland, his nostalgia—she failed in a double way: first, by infelicitously giving her poem a German title, "Wanderlied," and, secondly, by a dull and commonplace *imitation*, if not a parody, of Ethna Carbery, Nora Hopper, Moira O'Neil, Katharine Tynan, from which, too, is totally absent the light and glamor of the Neo-Keltic art of W. B. Yeats, and J. G. Synge.

Moreover, more of her imagery is derived from actual Nature in Canada than from mythological Nature in ancient Greece. The coloring from Canadian woods in Spring, Autumn and Winter is in her verse, also visualizations of Canadian fields and flowers, and the subtle handiwork of "the Frost King," and Canadian domestic felicities made possible by Nature, such as the winter arabesques on the window-panes in contrast with the inviting glow of burning logs on the hearth. And what but Canadian is this compelling line from "The Young Baptist"—

"Clear-footed from the frontiers of the world!"

And yet Dr. MacMechan insists on declaring that Marjorie Pickthall's poetry is "not—emphatically not—'a contribution to Canadian literature;' it is literature." I must admit that probably I have over-worked my formula that the poetry or prose of certain Canadians is "not a contribution to Canadian literature but to world literature." But emphatically Marjorie Pickthall's poetry is a contribution to Canadian literature; and is, or is not, a contribution to world literature, according as, or if, the poetry of Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, Bliss Carman, or Wilfrid Campbell is or is not world literature.

At any rate, after declaring that Marjorie Pickthall's poetry is emphatically not a contribution to Canadian literature, Dr. MacMechan contradictorily uses a considerable paragraph to show that "Canada has made her own subtle contribution" to her "ethereal songs." For instance, he cites Canadian Nature in her poetry. "Maple Leaves," he says, "are entwined in a song to the Nativity; choke-cherries and milkweed are decorations from Canadian fields and woods, the heart of Lalemant is laid bare in one soliloquy, and such a lyric as Frost Song is the most intimate interpretation of our winter ever written [Mr. Laurence E. Jones, *loc. cit.*, characterizes "Frost Song" amongst her "dull" and "commonplace" poems] . . . . . More subtle is the influence of our [Canadian] cloudless skies and hopeful air." (*The Halifax Herald*, April 22, 1922, page 8.)

That is to say, according to Dr. MacMechan, Marjorie Pickthall's Nature poetry *is* and is *not* a contribution to Canadian literature. Our view is that her Nature poetry is a contribution to Canadian literature; and that only time, the impartial and inexorable critic, will prove, that it is or is not world literature. In short, if I were signalizing the genius of Marjorie Pickthall's Nature poetry, I should employ this sub-title—"Lyrics in the Greek and Canadian Modes of Pictorializing Nature." Thus I should, by a single phrase, escape absurdly alleging that an Anglo-Canadian mind possessed Greek imagination and feeling for a mythological Nature, and signalize the fact that an Anglo-Canadian poet was gifted with a lively pagan sense of the beauty of a vanished world and a responsive sensibility to the beauty of a real and present world of Nature.

## III.—NOT A MYSTIC.

Hence arises this problem in aesthetic paradox. For a decade, from 1899 to 1909—*circa*—Marjorie Pickthall, as a poet, was preoccupied with naturalistic poetry. During that period her *spiritual* needs and satisfactions were *aesthetic* needs and satisfactions. An inward change came over her soul, and with it a change in the substance, atmosphere, color, and intent of her

MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL

Late portrait of the deceased poet and novelist. Courtesy of Hodder & Stoughton, London and Toronto, publishers of her novel, "The Bridge" (1922). To face page 22.

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poetry. Did she come to realize that *spiritual* needs could be satisfied, not by *aesthetic* but by *spiritual* values as such, and that beautiful treatment of religious values in verse could not, or might not, fulfil the longings of her aesthetic and her religious being?

Her earlier poetry certainly was not, in Tertullian's phrase, "*testimonium animae naturaliter Christianae*—"the witness of a spirit naturally Christian," that is, Catholic. But her later poetry, considerable of it, and even her first posthumously published poem, "Christ in the Museum," given out to the press by Sir Andrew Macphail on the day after her death, is assuredly witness of a spirit not naturally Catholic, but wistfully aware of the discrepancy between spiritual and aesthetic satisfactions, and yet unable to work out her own salvation, both literary and religious, by the brave acceptance of a definite Catholic faith and discipline.

It is, then, this *wistful* occupation with the legends, mysteries, and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church that has been construed by many into what they are pleased to call "medieval mysticism." But it is not mysticism. It might be alleged that as she went to Greek mythology for material for poetic treatment, so she turned to medieval Catholicism for legends and other material to treat poetically. Heine had such an interest in Catholic legends, as in his lyric, "Die Wallfahrt nach Kevlaar" ("The Pilgrimage to Kevler"), with its refrain, "Gelobt seist du, Marie" ("Praise be to Mary").

It is possible that Marjorie Pickthall found in certain Catholic customs and legends merely poetic material and poetic coloring, as in "The Lamp of Poor Souls" and "St. Yves' Poor"; but there is too much of the air of wistfulness in "Salutaris Hostia," "Pere Lalemant," "Pieter Marinus," "Deus Misereatur" and even in "Mary Shepherdess" and "A Child's Song of Christmas," to permit the view that the poet had only a pagan aesthetic interest, and not a deep and genuine religious or spiritual interest, in Catholic legend, dogma, and discipline. Aesthetic contemplation of spiritual ideals, with wistfulness, and the envisagement of them in verse, were essentially on her part an act of worship

and love of the Ideal, and may have satisfied the soul of the poet. But, in nowise, may such wistful aesthetic contemplation and envisagement be named mysticism.

That it was not mysticism in Marjorie Pickthall's case, may be known from the fact that she died in the Anglican faith, and that mysticism, far from being a striving to find God in the soul, and a consequent sense of want of union of the human, finite Soul with the World-Soul, which begets a poignant wistfulness of spirit, is a real conviction of direct, intuitional, personal "contact and commerce" with God, the result of which is to create in the subject enlarged spiritual vision of Truth and Beauty and Good, and a radiant moral and spiritual energy, and, above all, burning love of God and devotion to His causes. Such mystical knowledge has for its saving and sustaining grace "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."*

There are no evidences in the verse of Marjorie Pickthall, spiritually lovely and sublimated as it is, that the poet achieved such "mystical" knowledge of God, intimate union with God, and the surpassing peace of God.* Beauty is the clearest manifestation of the union of the Real and the Ideal, that is, of Perfection, and therefore a proof of the reality of God and of the supremacy of the Good and Truth, and since Marjorie Pickthall was aesthetically most highly endowed, so as to perceive and love Spiritual Beauty, it is a singular paradox that through her aesthetic perceptions she never attained the mystical knowledge and union with God which brings with it ineffable joy and peace of the spirit.

Had she attained that mystical knowledge, union, and joy and peace, as Christina Rossetti, or Alice Meynell, or that saintly poet, Father Tabb, attained them, and had she lived to write under such ineffable joy, I have no doubt that Marjorie Pickthall would have composed poetry in virtue of which she would be accorded a place close to Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. But let us love duly her poetry as it remains to us. In it we shall see Titania and Ariel suffusing the earth with a bright, airy magic; in it we shall hear the ethereal singing of a deathless nightingale; its magic and music shall be to the Spirit as the ruddy wine of Beauty and Gladness.

* Note 5, Page 27 and Note 6, Page 28.

# NOTES.

# NOTES.

NOTE 1, page 15. A telegram from Mr. R. H. Hathaway, Toronto, says: "Mr. Fred. Jacob, Musical and Dramatic Editor of the Mail and Empire, gives December 1899, as the date of the publication of the 'The Song of the Nixies' in that newspaper."

NOTE 2, page 17. From "On a Violet Leaf from Keats' Grave," published in fac-simile in "Canadian Singers and Their Songs," McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1919. Reproduced in fac-simile in this pamphlet, facing page . . . . .

NOTE 3, page 18. Dr. MacMechan signalizes Marjorie Pickthall as "Canada's chief poet." He says (Halifax Herald, April 22, 1922):—'Two volumes of verse, "The Drift of Pinions," and "The Lamp of Poor Souls"—two unworldly romances, "Little Hearts" and "The Bridge," a short play, "The Wood Carver's Wife," together with a considerable number of scattered stories and poems represent the literary activity of CANADA'S CHIEF POET' (the capitals are mine—J. D. L.) Campbell, of course, had died some few years ago. Lampman had been dead two decades or more. But Duncan Campbell Scott and Robert Norwood are still living; and certainly in quantity of production or in originality of poetic conception and spiritual dignity of thought or in absolute poetic style, Marjorie Pickthall cannot be made the peer, certainly not the superior, of Dr. Scott; and Dr. Norwood, though not perhaps always the exquisite artist that Marjorie Pickthall was, has profounder and more original poetic conceptions than were hers, and indubitably has greater spiritual power. Dr. MacMechan, in ranking Marjorie Pickthall in her day as "Canada's chief poet" shows neither philosophical acumen, nor that fine good sense which is the basis of sound critical judgment and authentic taste in literary values.

NOTE 4, page 19. The analogues from the tonal art for the poetry of Dr. Scott are the "durchcomponirt" structure of the Kunstlieder of Franck, Hugo Wolf, and Brahms, or the gossamer and subtilized beauty of the orchestral poems of Debussy. The analogue of the verbal music of Marjorie Pickthall's poetry is that of the Italian bel canto, or that, mostly, of refined coloratura. She was indeed supremely a verbal coloraturist.

NOTE 5, page 24. We must be careful not to confuse mysticism with the historical forms of it as a metaphysical or ontological doctrine. Rightly conceived, mysticism is an inward method of gaining knowledge of God or ultimate spiritual Reality; that is, the intimate union of spirit with spirit through real knowledge. The only problem concerning mysticism is as to the "validity" of mystical knowledge of God. Is it real knowledge? The epistemological problem, if it were settled affirmatively, namely, that the mystical knowledge of God is real knowledge, just as real as our knowledge of beauty, goodness and truth, would thus be a proof of the being of God, or rather such knowledge would make a proof of God's existence unnecessary.

Those who insist on reading up the nature and history of mysticism can find it in any good History of Philosophy; but it will be the metaphysical, not the epistemological, problem that will be orientated in such books. A

genuinely fine article on the epistemological meaning and validity of mysticism is Professor Rufus M. Jones's "The Mystic's Experience of God," in The Atlantic Monthly, Nov. 1921, pp. 637 to 645. But the best introduction to modern Christian mysticism is the poetry of Francis Thompson, Christina Rossetti, Alice Meynell, and Father Tabb.

NOTE 6, page 24. Marjorie Pickthall certainly lived a beautiful Christian life; but one can do this, as many Catholics do it, without being mystics. I believe that her soul rests, as we say, on the bosom of her Savior and God; for our God is not one to turn a deaf ear to such a prayer—and hope—as was expressed by the vanished poet in her "Deus Misereatur"—

> "Lo, our proud lamps are emptied of their light,
> Weary our hands to toil, our feet to roam;
> Our day is past and swiftly falls Thy night.
> Lord, lead us home."

I believe her beautiful soul has gone "home" to the World-Soul or God.

# APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX I.

**THE FIRST OF MARJORIE PICKTHALL'S POEMS TO BE PUBLISHED POSTHUMOUSLY: APRIL 21, 1922: IN THE DAILY PRESS.**

# CHRIST IN THE MUSEUM.

MONTREAL, April 20, 1922—Sir Andrew Macphail, close friend and sponsor of the late Marjorie Pickthall, and former Editor of the University Magazine, which published many of her poems and her first volume of Verse, "The Drift of Pinions," when informed, today, of her death yesterday, gave out for publication in the daily press the following hitherto unpublished poem, entitled "Christ in the Museum," the manuscript of which he had received from the deceased poet. This is the first of Marjorie Pickthall's poems to be published posthumously.

BRONZE bells and incense burners, and a flight
Of birds born out of iron, and fine as spray;
A dial that told the longest summer day
How sure, how swift the night;
And o'er the silent treasury, so high
No lips have kissed, no loving hands have clung,
Numbered and ticketed, the Christ is hung,
The many pass Him by.
None pause. Here come no agonies, no dreams,
Nothing is here to hurt Him nor to wake.
Year after year the golden iris gleams
A little paler by the lacquered lake,
And slow dust gathers on the hands, the side,
The thorn-set head of Love the crucified.

—Reprinted from *The Morning Chronicle*,
Halifax, N. S.

# APPENDIX II.

## ALLITERATION IN MARJORIE PICKTHALL'S LYRICAL POETRY.

Aside from rhythm, the musical quality of Marjorie Pickthall's lyrics is achieved chiefly by an astonishingly ingenious and beautiful use of alliteration. She was as successful as Tennyson in not having developed alliteration into a mannerism or trick. It is not felt to be overdone. Yet out of, roughly counted, about 2000 lines of verse in "The Lamp of Poor Souls," I find more than 400 alliterative; and while the average is 25 per cent. of the whole number of lines, some of the individual lyrics rise to 50 per cent. alliterative lines in each poem. As a craftswoman in poetical alliteration, Marjorie Pickthall, in my view, was unique, and I feel sure that had Tennyson and Swinburne been alive during her time and had they been shown her verse, they would have signalized the music of her alliterative lines as a unique and original quality of her poetry. Following are a few randomly chosen alliterative lines quoted from the volume, "The Lamp of Poor Souls"—

*Frighted of the glory gates and the starry stair* ("Mary Shepherdess").

*And the grey feet of the silence with a silver dream are shod* ("Birds at Evening").

*And the dead shepherds herd the sheep cropping in the dew* ("Improvisation on the Flute.")

*Too dear for death to dim, or life cast down* ("Vale.")

*For life is as a leaf is, and like a flower it fails* ("Song.")

*Dawn rose in silver, shepherding few stars* ("The Young Baptist.")

*One has built a roof of dreams where the white doves nest* ("The Little Fauns to Proserpine.")

*Went the light-foot Mysian maids, calling Hylas home* (ibid.)

*And hear new stars come singing from God's hand* ("The Immortal")

*From forest pools where fragrant lilies are* ("Dawn.")

*Her honeying pipes of pearl, her velvet lip* ("Frost Song.")

*When the broad, bright stars dropped down and the soft sky darkened* ("A Mother in Egypt.")

# APPENDIX III.

## COLOR EPITHETS AND PHRASES IN MARJORIE PICKTHALL'S POETRY. ALSO EXAMPLES OF ORIGINAL AND STRIKING IMAGES AND POETIC FIGURES.

In inventing winsome or compelling color epithets and phrases and original and striking images and figures, Marjorie Pickthall was as happy and ingenious as she was in musical craftsmanship. As I have said elsewhere, she was a virtuoso in word-music and word-painting. Following are a few samples of her color epithets and phrases and striking images and figures, quoted from the volume, "The Lamp of Poor Souls."—

*Dark with the green silence under the gold weather* ("Vale.")
*Browner than the hazel husk* ("The Little Fauns to Proserpine.")
*Ere the wild black horses cry, ere the night has birth* (ibid.)
*Before whose feet the flaming crocus sprung* ("To Alcithoe.")
*The milk-white poppies closed within your hand* (ibid.)
*And close the cowslips' cups of honeyed gold* ("Dawn.")
*Yellow for the ripened rye, white for ladies' wearing* ("The Green Month")
*Of emerald light and amber shade,*
*Of silver shadows and golden glooms* ("The Pool.")
*White as the sea-mew or the wind-spun foam* ("Pieter Marinus.")
*He had no wine-clear maples* ("A Child's Song".)

### IMAGES AND FIGURES

*Where cling the moths that are the longings of men* ("Improvisation on the Flute.")
*Sweet as the lips of night* (ibid.)
*Thy lips are bright as the edge of the sword* ("The Bridegroom of Cana.")
*On the great green downs o' heaven* ("Wiltshire.")
*He saw the moonlit rafters of the world* ("The Young Baptist.")
*Clear-footed from the frontiers of the world* (ibid.)
*And hear new stars come singing from God's hand* ("The Immortal.")
*To the wind that cried last night like a soul in sin* ("A Mother in Egypt.")
*To the God-beholding desert where the soundless years go by* ("Youth's End.")
*With blank eyes smiling on eternity* ("Mons Angelorum.")

# APPENDIX IV.

## PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS OF POEMS BY MARJORIE PICKTHALL. ALSO REVIEWS AND APPRECIATIONS.

For the following titles, dates, and names of magazines in which Marjorie Pickthall's poems were originally published, I am indebted to *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.* Both my time and facilities were not sufficient either to make a complete bibliography or to do thoroughly careful collation. But I have verified, so far as possible, all the references in *The Reader's Guide*, and have obtained other data from other sources. In my "hunt"I find that the earliest appearance of Marjorie Pickthall as a poet of recognized gifts was in *The Century Magazine*, April, 1905, when the late poet was in the 22nd year of her age; and as a recognized writer of short stories, her earliest appearance in any of the "big" magazines was in the *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1908, with a French tale, "La Tristesse." In the following list of her poems, those marked with an asterisk (*) are still "fugitive." The others were republished in "The Lamp of Poor Souls" (1916)—

| POEM | MAGAZINE | MONTH | YEAR |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Mother in Egypt | Century | April | 1905 |
| Dream River | Canadian | May | 1905 |
| The House's Setting | Canadian | May | 1905 |
| My Father He Was a Fisherman | Harper's | February | 1906 |
| The Sea Witch | McClure's | June | 1906 |
| Kwannon | Eclectic. | June | 1906 |
| Wanderlied | American | August | 1906 |
| The Little Sister of the Prophet | Century | February | 1907 |
| The Bridegroom of Cana | University | October | 1907 |
| Amorel | University | December | 1907 |
| Bega | Canadian | June | 1908 |
| Evening | University | December | 1908 |
| Jasper's Song | Canadian | March | 1909 |
| Fame | University | April | 1909 |
| In the Gardens of Shushan | American | August | 1909 |
| The Lamp of Poor Souls | Scribner's | September | 1909 |
| *On Lac Sainte Irenee | Canadian | December | 1909 |
| St. Yves' Poor | University | February | 1910 |
| The Lovers of Marchaid | Harper's | May | 1910 |
| *Swallow Song | Canadian | September | 1910 |
| *The Almond Song | Appleton's | May | 1911 |
| The Little Fauns to Proserpine | University | February | 1912 |
| *Autumn in the Islands | Atlantic | September | 1912 |
| A Saxon Epitaph | University | October | 1912 |
| *Chanson de la Tour | University | October | 1913 |
| In a Monastery Garden | University | November | 1913 |
| Birds at Evening | University | December | 1913 |
| *February | Canadian | February | 1914 |
| Travellers' Joy | University | February | 1914 |

| POEM. | MAGAZINE. | MONTH. | YEAR. |
|---|---|---|---|
| *From a Lost Anthology | University | April | 1914 |
| *A Little Song of Angels | University | February | 1915 |
| Improvisation on the Flute | University | April | 1915 |
| *Vita Brevis (Two Sonnets) | University | December | 1915 |
| Mary Shepherdess | Scribner's | December | 1915 |
| Dimitte Mortuos | University | April | 1916 |
| *Ecclesiastes | University | October | 1916 |
| Salutaris Hostia | Living Age | June 9 | 1917 |
| *Quiet | Dial | October 25 | 1917 |
| *1. The Gardner's Boy<br>*2. Miranda's Tomb (Sonnet) | University | December | 1917 |
| *1. Adam and Eve<br>*2. Sheep | University | December | 1918 |
| *To Timarion | Dial | November 15 | 1919 |
| *Mary Tired | University | December | 1919 |
| *Finis | Canadian | December | 1919 |
| On a Violet Leaf from Keat's Grave. Fac-simile of author's handwriting. Published in "Canadian Singers and Their Songs," Toronto | | | 1919 |
| Reproduced fac-simile in this pamphlet. See opposite page 16. | | | |
| *The Wood Carver's Wife | University | April | 1920 |
| *Again | Canadian | August | 1920 |
| *The Tree | Woman's Home Companion | March | 1921 |
| *Shut-in | Sunset Mag | August | 1921 |
| *CHRIST IN THE MUSEUM (Posthumous) | Daily Press | April 21 | 1922 |

## REVIEWS, LECTURES AND OTHER APPRECIATIONS.

REVIEWS of "The Drift of Pinions": Canadian Magazine, Toronto, Nov. 1913; Jean Graham in "Saturday Night," Toronto, Nov. 1913; Laurence E. Jones in University Magazine, Montreal, Dec. 1913. (A sympathetic but discerning critical estimate).

ARTICLE by J. W. Garvin, prefacing selections from the poetry of Marjorie Pickthall, in Garvin's "Canadian Poets," p. 306; 1916.

LECTURE by Dr. A. MacMechan, Halifax, N. S.; reported in The Evening Echo and The Evening Mail, Halifax, Dec. 10, 1918.

ARTICLES immediately following death of the poet—

By "Farmer Smith" (pseudonym Laura P. Carten) in Halifax Herald, April 21, 1922 (Summary of poet's career and qualities; also special reprint of the poet's lyric, "On a Violet Leaf from Keat's Grave," hitherto published only in fac-simile of the poet's handwriting in "Canadian Singers and Their Songs.")

By Dr. A. MacMechan in Halifax Herald, April 22, 1922 (a sincere and engagingly written appreciation).

By Dr. J. D. Logan in The Morning Chronicle, Halifax, April 22, 1922 (An editorial appreciation.)

By "The Gleaner" (pseudonym of Rev. Father O'Sullivan, Port Hope) in The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension, Toronto, April 27, 1922. (A warm, generous, and discerning appreciation. Valuable for certain dates, for the reprinting of "The Song of the Nixies," the late poet's verses first to be published, according to her own statement to "The Gleaner," and for, particularly, the noting of how Marjorie Pickthall beautifully embodied some of the spirit of Catholicism in her poems).

By Editorial Writers in the leading dailies in Canada. For a notable example from The Manitoba Free Press, see Appendix IX.

# APPENDIX V.

## PUBLISHER'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PROJECTED LIMITED EDITION (1,000 COPIES) OF THE "COLLECTED VERSE" OF MARJORIE PICKTHALL.

Reprinted from "Inset" loose leaflet inserted in *The University Magazine*, April, 1913 (Vol. XII, No. 2).

NOTE the frank statement of the costs of manufacture and sale, the aim of the undertaking and the appeal for subscriptions to the edition, and the necessity of the appeal and the method of publication, namely, that a book of verse (which, in this case, as past experience in other cases has shown) "issued through the usual channels of commerce would not warrant the expense."—J. D. L.

## THE DRIFT OF PINIONS.

The collected verse of Marjorie L. C. Pickthall is in process of publication by The University Magazine, in a suitable book. The edition will be of a thousand copies, and the actual cost of manufacture and sale will amount to $600. The books will be sold at one dollar each. Six hundred copies must be sold to meet the expense, and if all the edition is disposed of at the full rate, the profit to the author will be four hundred dollars. This publication is undertaken in the belief that readers of The University Magazine will encourage this effort to print in Canada, and publish, a book of Canadian verse which will be a valuable accession not alone to Canadian literature, but to literature in general. Publishers are convinced by experience that a book of verse issued through the usual channels of commerce would not warrant the expense. For that reason The University Magazine has undertaken the task and makes a confident appeal to its readers for support. [See Appendix VI. for factual proof that Sir Andrew Macphail's confidence in this matter was splendidly justified by the sales of the book.—J. D. L.]

. . . . . .

This form may be used.

*To the Editor of The University Magazine:*
*216 Peel St., Montreal.*

*Please send me when published .....cop...of "Drift of Pinions" by Marjorie L. C. Pickthall, for which I enclose.....dollar.*

*Name*.....

*Address*.....

*Price: one dollar; ten copies eight dollars.*

# APPENDIX VI.

## PUBLISHER'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PUBLICATION AND GRATIFYING SALES OF THE "COLLECTED VERSE"—LIMITED EDITION OF "THE DRIFT OF PINIONS"—OF MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL, AND STATEMENT REGARDING NUMBER OF REMAINDER COPIES.

Reprinted from "Inset" loose leaflet inserted in *The University Magazine*, December, 1913 (Vol. XII, No. 4)

NOTE—"The Drift of Pinions" has been "out of print" for several years and is now regarded as amongst the "rarissima" of *Canadiana* and English poetical literature (at any rate so regarded by Canadian collectors). All of the poems that appeared in "The Drift of Pinions," as well as a number of other poems which were not included in that first volume, were included in the poet's second volume of verse, "The Lamp of Poor Souls," published by John Lane, New York, 1916. See Appendix IV. for titles and dates of publication of still other poems not in the second volume, or published since 1916 in magazines; and see Appendix I. for the date of publication and text of the deceased poet's verses—"Christ in the Museum"—first to be published posthumously, April 21, 1922, that is, on the second day following her death.—J. D. L.

## THE DRIFT OF PINIONS.

According to the announcement in the April Number, the poems of Marjorie L. C. Pickthall have been published by the University Magazine in a suitable book. The sales have been most gratifying and the remainder of the edition—about 100 copies—is offered to subscribers until December 30th.

. . . . . .

*To the Editor of the University Magazine*:
216 *Peel St., Montreal.*

*Please send me.....cop....of "Drift of Pinions" by Marjorie L. C. Pickthall, for which I enclose.....dollar.*

*Name*.....

*Address*.....

*Price: one dollar; ten copies eight dollars.*

## APPENDIX VII.

### FAC-SIMILE PRESS ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH AND OF THE WORK OF MARJORIE PICKTHALL.

(From The Globe, Toronto, April 20, 1922).

# MARJORIE PICKTHALL IS DEAD AND LITERATURE OF DOMINION MOURNS LOSS OF FINE WRITER

## Brilliant Young Toronto Poet and Novelist Succumbs After Operation Performed in General Hospital at Vancouver

## HER INITIAL EFFORT SOLD TO THE GLOBE

VANCOUVER, April 19.—Marjorie Pickthall died this afternoon at the General Hospital. She failed to survive an operation performed on April 7.

The sudden death of Marjorie Pickthall here this afternoon was due to an embolus following an operation performed successfully. She had, in fact, recovered so rapidly from the effect of the operation that she attended to correspondence and received many callers this morning. At 3 p. m. the dislodged blood clot seemingly became embedded in a vital organ, and she passed away in a few minutes.

Deceased came to British Columbia two years ago. She spent the first summer with Mrs. Ecclestone Mackay, the British Columbia author, later going to Victoria, from which city she returned to Vancouver two months ago. It was in British Columbia that she wrote her last novel of the Great Lakes, "The Bridge." The body will be forwarded to Toronto on Thursday, on instructions from her father.

Canadian literature suffers a severe loss through the death of Marjorie Pickthall. Though a native of London, England, where she was born on September 14, 1883, she came to Canada at the age of seven, and had since identified herself closely with the life and thought of this country. As a child, and, indeed, until a few years ago, she lived in Toronto, her father being Arthur C. Pickthall. She early manifested a strong inclination to write, being possessed of a style of exquisite delicacy and imagery, both in prose and in verse.

**Sold First Story to The Globe.**

In 1898, when but 15 years of age, she sold her first story. It was a little thing, illustrated with sketches from her own pen, and was bought by The Globe and published in The Circle of Young Canada, then conducted by its founder, Miss Laura B. Durand. In it Miss Durand recognized the germ of genius, and it became the first of a series of contributions to Miss Durand's depart-

ment of The Globe, covering several years. The price paid for her first story was $3, a not inconsiderable sum in those days, considering its length and the prevailing Press rates.

Miss Durand, who was closely associated with her for a number of years, spoke feelingly of her deep and rich nature. To strangers, she said Miss Pickthall gave the impression of great reserve and almost coldness, but underneath there lived a very warm and affectionate soul, full of devotion to beauty and the loveliness in life. This was demonstrated in her passionate devotion to her mother, whose death about ten years ago threatened to put an end to her literary career.

**Buried Poems in Loved One's Grave.**

So great was the sorrow caused by her mother's death that she resolved never to touch a pen again. Her conviction of her inability to turn again to her profession was such that when her mother died all her manuscript poems were laid by her in her mother's casket and were buried with her.

Shortly after Miss Pickthall went to England, where she remained during the war. Although not physically strong she threw herself into war work with all her heart and learned to drive a motor and engaged actively in war gardening. With the war came added sorrows in the loss of many dear friends and relatives, among them a beloved cousin, Roy Pickthall, who was killed in action.

Tribute to the personal charm of Miss Pickthall was given last night by Miss Jean Graham, Editor of The Canadian Home Journal, who knew her intimately during the greater part of her literary career. "Her personal charm was as great as her literary gifts," said Miss Graham. "She had a rare and wonderfully sympathetic nature, with a delicate appreciation of all that was lovely. She was a great lover of dumb animals, and any cruelty to them shocked her and hurt her deeply."

**Time Brought Its Recompense.**

Although the death of her mother was a shock to her imaginative writing, when she resumed there was a deeper note and more telling message in her work. She returned from England in 1920 and spent the past two years on the Pacific Coast, principally in Victoria, "to fulfill an old dream," as she wrote a friend recently, adding that she "did not wish to leave again in a hurry."

Miss Pickthall's poetry was not of a popular order, but it is exquisite, finished and full of meaning, often requiring careful study to reveal its full significance. She had an unusual understanding of Biblical messages, and not a few of her best poems are interpretative of thoughts from the Scriptures. The universal appeal of such subjects, as well as the literary craftsmanship of the work itself, should ensure these poems an enduring place. This was seen first in "The Drift of Pinions," published in 1913, her first volume of poetry, and again in "The Lamp of Poor Souls" (1916), titles which alone show the poetic quality of the writer's mind.

The San Francisco Argonaut, reviewing the second book, said: "Miss Pickthall's verse is accurate and musical, and the things that she says are worth saying." This book contained the notable poem, "Mary Shepherdess."

**Powers of Prose Developed Rapidly.**

Meantime, Miss Pickthall's work in prose had developed rapidly. First as a writer of sketches, she showed a sure touch and fine sense of literary values. Then she ventured into short stories, which found favor in critical circles in the

English-speaking world. In 1915 she published her first novel, "Little Hearts," and lastly she wrote a full length novel, "The Bridge." This deals with imaginative incidents in the region of the Great Lakes, and is marked by thrilling incidents in a setting of remarkable beauty.

It has been running serially in The London Sphere of late, and was highly praised by Clement K. Shorter, the famous Editor of that weekly. It is also running in Everybody's. It is published in Canada by Hodder & Stoughton, and is now in its third edition. An edition of her poem, "The Wood Carver's Wife," is to be issued shortly by McClelland & Stewart. In her fiction, Miss Pickthall wrote with the same sureness of touch and fine feeling, and was on the way to a high place among Canadian creative writers.

Miss Pickthall is the second Canadian woman poet of distinction to die in Vancouver, the other being Pauline Johnson, the Indian poetess, who is buried in Stanley Park.

# APPENDIX VIII.

## FAC-SIMILE PRESS ACCOUNT OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE AND BURIAL OF THE BODY OF MARJORIE PICKTHALL.

(From The Globe, Toronto, April 27, 1922.)

# GIFTED WRITER IS LAID AT REST

## Glowing Tributes Paid to Noble Gifts of Marjorie Pickthall

### HER MEMORY CHERISHED

Marjorie Pickthall was buried yesterday. She lies beside the mother whom she adored, in St. James' Cemetery. The two graves are on the brink of the ravine, facing north-east. Overhead spread the branches of a noble maple, covered with budding leaves, now just breaking into tender green. Only her father and a small group of immediate friends stood by the graveside and watched as her body was committed to the earth.

**Tributes to Her Genius.**

The funeral service was held at 2 o'clock in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Westmoreland avenue. The pale-grey casket, covered with flowers, stood at the foot of the chancel steps unopened, while Chopin's "Funeral March" vibrated through the little church prior to the beginning of the service. The gathering, which was small numerically, included a number of representative literary men and women of the city. The service followed the regular Anglican burial liturgy. A brief address was delivered by Rev. Canon A. Hart, rector of the church. There were no pallbearers. Only her father, A. C. Pickthall, followed the casket from the church.

There was a huskiness in the voice of Canon Hart as he spoke of the tenderness in which Marjorie Pickthall had been held in the hearts of so many Canadians, many of whom knew her only by her writings. "This gifted, noble woman," said Canon Hart, "although born in England, the Motherland of our race, was truly a Canadian in heart and spirit. She spent the greater part of her life in Canada, and much of it in Toronto. She loved Canada, and as a Canadian she won for herself a name among the foremost of the country's authors.

**Writings Will Live.**

"Her memory will be cherished by all who knew her personally, and mostly by those who were privileged to be called her friends. But although cut off before the full power of her genius was known—as many will say—she lives still. Only that which is mortal is dead. She herself has passed on, but she will live on earth in her works, for her personality breaks through every page of her books.

"In that fuller life, into which she has entered, we must believe that she will have even greater opportunity to use those gifts of heart and intellect with which she was so richly endowed, in the work of the God whom she ever worshipped and served."

Among those who attended the service were Prof. Pelham Edgar, Prof. Coleman and Miss Coleman, Prof. A. E. Lang and Mrs. Lang, Mr. and Mrs. John Garvin, Miss Jean Graham, Miss Florence Withrow, E.

S. Caswell, J. E. Middleton and Miss Queenie Gale.

**Floral Emblems.**

Flowers were sent by the Vancouver Authors' Association, the Canadian Women's Press Club, Montreal Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association, Toronto Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association, Hodder & Stoughton (Vancouver), Isabel Ecclestone MacKay, Mr. and Mrs. William Drake, Willie and Emma E. Drake, Jean Graham; Peggy, Emily and Cecil; M. Pickthall, the staff of Victoria College Library, and A. C. Pickthall, Miss Pickthall's father.

Attached to the wreath sent by the Montreal Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association was a beautiful poem signed by Alfred Gordon.

*Requiescat in Pace.*

## APPENDIX IX.

### A NOTABLE EXAMPLE OF EDITORIAL APPRECIATION OF MARJORIE PICKTHALL'S MIND AND ART.

(From the Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg, April, 1922).

# MARJORIE PICKTHALL: An Appreciation

The sudden death of Marjorie Pickthall will shock her fellow-craftsmen and all who knew her in any capacity, and it will sadden many who never had speech with her face to face but who were acquainted with her in that intimacy with which none may meddle, the intimacy between writer and reader. This death means sad loss to Canadian Letters. Like Louis Hemon, whose sudden death has made us poorer, she was not Canadian born. She was born in Plymouth, of seafaring ancestry, and the sea was in her blood as it is sometimes in her song. But she came, a child of four, to Canada and received her education here. . . . For many years her health had been delicate, and the beautiful, spirituelle expression of her eyes was the mark of suffering. Her poetry bore that mark. Its depth of feeling and of thought came out of suffering.

It was about fifteen years ago that Sir Andrew Macphail, reading a little poem by Miss Pickthall in a Toronto paper, made inquiries, and after that, he published her poetry steadily in the "University Magazine," where it attracted attention not only in Canada but in Great Britain and in the United States. Her poems appeared in Scribner's, Harper's, The Century, The Atlantic Monthly, and other magazines.

In 1913, the University Magazine published them under the appropriate title, "The Drift of Pinions," the phrase being chosen from Francis Thompson's posthumous poem, "In No Strange Land." This volume is one of the most precious books in Canadian Literature. And more, such poems as "The Lamp of Poor Souls," "A Mother in Egypt," "The Bridegroom of Cana," "Mons Angelorum," "The Little Sister of the Prophet," give her a high place in the great choir that sings in the English language, while such short songs as "Duna" and "Birds at Evening" go in the catalogue of lyrics whose melody and meaning haunt the inward ear and go deep into the heart.

Miss Pickthall was very like Mrs. Meynell in her meticulous care for form, in her scholarly mind, and in a certain quality which may well be named the sanctity of song. Of late years she had written much in prose, short stories mainly of adventurous and solitary places in northern British Columbia. Her new novel, "The Bridge," has its action in Ontario, all its landscapes vividly linked with lake and sky and the phenomena of changing seasons, both land and lake and all phases of nature linked close with humanity. In this book, also, the poet's imagination and the poet's instinctive perception of the human heart are manifest. And the style is the style of one to whom English prose has its essential moral qualities touching form.

In the common term of regret, we may say that Canadian Literature will be poorer for the death of this writer who had yet to reach the zenith of her power. The compensation is that she has enriched our literature because she put her genius out to that usury which involves scrupulous and affectionate diligence.

# APPENDIX X.

## MARJORIE LOWREY CHRISTIE PICKTHALL
## (1883-1922)

### VITAL HISTORY.

BORN—September 14, 1883, London, England.
DIED—April 19, 1922, Vancouver, Canada.
BODY INTERRED, April 26, 1922, St. James Cemetery, Toronto, Canada.

### LITERARY HISTORY.

*Fugitive: Poems and Stories.*

*First Poem.* Published in The Mail and Empire, Dec. 1899. See also Appendix IV. for bibliography of other "fugitive poems".

*First Short Story.* Published in The Globe, Toronto, 1898. See also Appendices IV. and VII.

*Other Short Stories:* "On Ile de Paradis" (Canadian Magazine, March, '06); "La Tristesse" (Atlantic Monthly, Jan. '08); "A Worker in Sandalwood" (ibid, Dec. '09); "Black Orchid" (McClure's Magazine, Sep., '10); "Left Behind" (Delineator, June '10); "Mannering's Men" (Century Magazine, Aug., '10); "O-Jii-San" (Sunset Magazine, Aug., '10); "Twa Macs" (Canadian Magazine, Dec., '10); "Blanchisseuse Doree" (ibid, Dec., '12); "Friends"(Century, March, '14); "Cheap" (Harper's, May, '14); "He That Cometh After" (Harper's, Dec., '14) "Forgiver" (Bellman Magazine, Jan., '18); "The Third Generation" (Ibid, Dec. '18); "Seventh Dream" (Ladies' Home Journal, '19); "The Boy in the Corner" (Woman's Home Companion, May, '20); "The Name" (Sunset Magazine, March, '20); "Without Light" (Good Housekeeping, March, '20); "Eye of a Needle" (Harper's, Dec., '20); "Green Loco." (Delinator, July, 21); "The Black Hand" (Century, Oct.,'21); "The Man They Pitied" (Century, Nov., '21); "The Saga of Kweetchel" (Century Mag., Feb. '22); "The Man Who Climbed" (Red Book, June '22).

*Books: Poems and Novels.*

*First Volume of Poems* ("The Drift of Pinions"). Published by The University Magazine for Canada, and by John Lane, for the United States and British Empire, 1913.

*Second Volume of Poems.* ("The Lamp of Poor Souls"). Published by John Lane, 1916.

*Third Volume of Verse* ("The Wood Carver's Wife"). In Press. To be published by McClelland and Stewart, Toronto. See Appendix VII.

*First Novel* ("Little Hearts"). Published by Methuen, 1915.

*Second Novel* ("The Bridge"). Published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1922; serially in The Sphere, London, and Everybody's Magazine, New York, 1922.

*Books: Juveniles.*

"Dick's Desertion"; "The Valley of Gold"; "The Straight Road"; "Billy's Hero." Published—*circa* 1910—by Partridge, London, and in Musson's "Canada Series." "A Worker in Sandalwood" (1915.) Published by the Missionary Education Movement.

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